



Proposed Co-Location of Wilma Rudolph Learning Center and Hope Learning Academy
January 10, 2018
1628 W. Washington
6:00-8:00 p.m.

CPS Staff in Attendance

Annie Righi, Cheryl Nevins, Brian Metcalf, Carla Escobar, Lori Guidry, Carl Hurdlik, Natasha Patterson, Syda Taylor, Juan Maldonado, Norma Seledon, Kimeco Roberson, Lauren Turner, Mark Scott, Carmone Alexander, Corey Walden, Samuel Goshay, Elizabeth Keenen, Cynthia Sanders

CPS Presentation

Brian Metcalf, Chief of Schools: Metcalf opened the meeting with a welcome and introduction. He went through the logistics of the meeting, how to register and speak, and the format of the meeting. Each speaker has two minutes for public comment. Metcalf introduced Natasha Patterson, Deputy Chief of Schools and Cheryl Nevins, Regional Portfolio Planner, and Holly Dacres, Rudolph principal and Michael Jakubowski, Hope principal. After public comment Central Office representatives, Sarah Briggs from OODLS and Laurie Guidry from Social and Emotional Learning would be available for questions/comments. The purpose of meeting is to allow CEO Jackson and the Board to hear feedback about this specific proposal. Questions or comments can also be emailed to transitions@cps.edu or submitted in writing at the registration table. Additional information about school transitions is available at cps.edu/transitions. The meeting will be available online within 5 days at the same site.

Cheryl Nevins, Deputy Chief of Schools: Nevins summarized the proposed School Action. On October 31, 2017 CPS published draft guidelines for school actions. On December 1, 2017 CPS proposed school actions and sent notice letters and draft transition plans. In January 2018 CPS will hold two community meetings and one public hearing prior to any recommendation to the Board. The February Board meeting is the earliest the Board can vote on the recommended action.

Rudolph Learning Center, located across the street at 110 N Paulina Street will move to Hope Learning Academy at 1628 W Washington Blvd. Rudolph will continue to design and implement a high quality program for students with significant disabilities who require a significantly modified curriculum. Professional development will focus on supporting transitioning students into the new building. Climate and Culture team will be

developed to plan and promote school- wide policies and continue to support a welcoming and supportive school environment. If the proposal is approved by the Board, the move will begin to be planned in March 2018. Potential pick up/ drop off locations could be N Paulina or W Maple. The building is 100% ADA accessible.

In October 2017 the Rudolph community (administration, LSC, teacher, staff, current and alumni parents, community members, and elected officials) recommended the colocation.

Rudolph is currently pre-k to fifth grade with an enrollment of 98 students. Rudolph enrolls throughout year based on IEPs. Rudolph will remain a school with no boundaries.

Hope also serves pre-k to fifth grade with no boundaries. Currently there are 355 students. Hope will continue to be a school with no boundaries as it is a contract school. Hope is a contract school that serves 355 students and also has no boundary.

Public Comments

Beginning: 6:21pm

Alexis Smith, former Rudolph student: Smith supports the proposal. She was a student 14 years ago. The Rudolph students will have a lunch room. When she was a student, there was no lunchroom and students would sit in the classroom with only classmates and eat lunch off of a cart. She found it sad because she couldn't see friends from other classes. She wants students now to enjoy something she didn't have. Students will also have an art room. There was no art room when she was a student; a teacher would come to the classroom with giant cart. Smith believes it will be a great environment to have the extra space, and to potentially be able to go to the same school after 5th grade.

Rosa Cole, Rudolph Parent/LSC president: Cole supports the proposal and working together with students, parents, staff and community, and Facilities for relocation. The move will ensure students have a safe learning environment and access to needed facilities and general education peers. The students will now have a lunch room, gym, auditorium and a locker room with showers. The proposal will also decrease unnecessary transitions by allowing for school growth and expansion. Cole supports increasing preschool or expanding grade levels and notes that the Rudolph principal supports expanding Rudolph to 8th grade. The proposal will increase interactions between special education and general education in special events, recess, gym, lunch, and peer buddies. The proposal will also increase parental involvement and allow space for a parent resource and community room as Rudolph receives Title 1 funding. Currently at Rudolph there is no space for students to receive nursing services and parents to meet privately for IEP meetings and other sensitive consultations. Cole believes the proposal will allow for an increased safety component. The Rudolph building currently needs several costly repairs including a new roof, repairs to windows, air conditioning, heating system, and leaks. There was a fire in in the building that was caused by faulty U-vent, which is used to regulate temperatures in each room. Some

students require temperature control to decrease seizures. There have been multiple repairs to U-vents in all rooms since the beginning of school year. Sharing a school building site will decrease this cost. Cole notes that the current Spaulding campus is underutilized and 100% ADA accessible. Merging the schools will allow for a consolidation of the engineering, custodial, and nutrition staff, saving money. Multiple investors are interested in the Rudolph building and the parking lot can be rented, saving additional money.

Dana Galati, Assistant Principal at Rudolph- Galati supports the proposal. There is a need and it is essential to create a learning environment so that students with severe disabilities have access to a beneficial learning environment. There is a need for a strategically designed space and collaboration with students and staff to provide a richer, enhanced educational experience. Galati stated that they would continue social and emotional time and reading buddies. The proposal will differentiate service and support to a unique student population. Students and families deserve a typical educational experience.

Pamela Metcalf, parent of student at Hope- Metcalf does not support the proposal. As a parent of a diverse learner at Hope, she notes that her child had difficult time getting acclimated to the school and praises the school for working both her and her child. Metcalf's concern is she wants Hope go to the 8th grade as this will provide her child and other children a place that feels like home. She believes that if another school merges with Hope in the future, there may not be enough room to expand to the 8th grade. She is concerned for her child and others on the spectrum that changing to another school will cause regressions or cause the child to act out.

Marit McCausand, Parent and former Physical Therapist at Hope- McCausand supports the proposal. She was formerly a physical therapist at Hope and city-wide. She believes the benefits are a fully accessible building with a variety of spaces such as a library, gym, wide hallways, stairs, and elevators. Access to the school building will allow for real life opportunities and spaces for learning, an opportunity to interact with all students, and for learning beyond the classroom. Being around special needs students will provide general education students opportunities to grow as a person and break down barriers.

Carmen Frando, Rudolph Parent- Frando supports the proposal. She believes this will provide a better environment for the children. She has seen a great growth in her child after enrollment at Rudolph. Staff will have more space. Children can eat in the lunchroom, there is a library, and the children from Rudolph will get to experience what every other child has in their school.

Charlene Clay, teacher at Rudolph for 27 years- Clay supports the proposal. She stated that Rudolph was originally an annex and the school is in dire need of repairs that have gone from bad to worse. The students have to currently eat their lunch in the classroom. Assemblies are packed into the gym room, which is used as an "everything room". Clay wants to see the students treated as other children are, and notes that they

need to interact with other students. Clay believes they need to relocate as the school is falling to pieces. There was a fire and the school is too small. Clay supports expanding Hope/Rudolph to 8th grade. She has seen students leave and want to come back because they are having problems.

Maria Del Pilar, Rudolf parent- Del Pilar supports the proposal. She agrees with other parents in regards to the need for more space and believes it will be really nice for students to be in a larger school. Special needs kids will benefit from types of offerings at Hope including speech and physical therapy. Currently Rudolf has no auditorium but Hope does.

Michelle Jones, parent to former student- Jones supports the proposal.

Estella Johnson Solid, Hope parent- Johnson Solid supports the proposal. There will be an opportunity for after school programs. She believes students in both schools will benefit.

Michael Jakubowski, Principal of Hope- Jakubowski supports the proposal. The mission of Hope is to create learning environment for all students. Twenty-two percent of students at Hope are diverse learners, the largest in district. Having both students in the school will result in a total population of 351 students. Students at Hope embrace difference. Jakubowski supports an expansion to the 8th grade. However, lack of parking, safety and security during drop off and pick up, the state of the current facility (lights out, paint peeling) are concerns that need addressed before Hope looks at expanding. Jakubowski believes the district has a great opportunity to put in an inclusive playground for students and the community. He notes that there is a full gym. He wants part of the building set aside for expansion through 8th grade.

Ayanna Peters, Rudolph parent- Peters supports the proposal. Rudolph is an amazing facility but can be much better. Both schools will benefit under the proposal. Children should learn there are people different from them.

Holly Dacres, Principal of Rudolph- Dacres supports the proposal. She believes that they need new space as the students deserve an opportunity to become great and become as independent as they can. To do that they need a new space.

At 6:59p.m. Metcalf announced that additional people could sign up to speak.
RESUME: 7:07 p.m.

Amy Brandt, Hope parent- Brandt supports the proposal. She recognizes the legitimate use for space but believes it would be helpful if there was a solid plan. Brandt works in the cafeteria once a week and has observed that it is busy and full. She is concerned about fitting two schools of kids in one cafeteria. She also notes that the pool doesn't function. She believes Rudolph students deserve a better facility but wants to know how the proposal is beneficial to students currently at Hope. Brandt supports expansion to 8th grade.

Margaret Guillory, Hope parent- Guillory supports the proposal. However, she is seeking more information from Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and feels as though CPS has not treated Hope as an entity in this discussion. Guillory wants to see CPS treat Hope and Rudolph as two amazing schools that have a great deal to offer children, together. She asks that a representative come into the schools and provide a better, more detailed plan.

Lisa Kee, Rudolph parent- Kee supports the proposal and sees it as an opportunity to collaborate and work together as a force.

Darrell Brackenridge, Rudolph parent- Brackenridge supports the proposal as he wants his child in a positive atmosphere. He says he is speaking on behalf of those who can't speak for themselves.

Angie Lockhard, Parent- Lockhard supports the proposal. Moving to Hope will provide more space and the students deserve more.

Chris Brackenridge Sr., Rudolph parent- Brackenridge supports the proposal and wishes to collaborate with Hope parents, faculty, and staff to see what it actually looks like to have both schools combined.

Kenisha Wilburn, Rudolph parent- Wilburn supports the proposal. She acknowledges the fear of the unknown when combining the schools but believes it will be a good thing as it will allow for two budgets, and get kids what they need, and help students with disabilities.

I.O., current student and volunteer at Rudolf- I.O. supports the proposal. The student says that Rudolph feels like "one big family community" and by sharing a campus it will make a bigger and better community

Holly Dacres, Principal of Rudolph- Dacres again supports the proposal. She recognizes fear of unknown and encourages communication between both groups of parents.

Comments concluded at 7:27 pm

Metcalf concludes the meeting at 8:02 p.m. by directing the attendees to the tables where Central Office representatives are available for additional discussion.